

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended): An information processing apparatus for managing a network system provided with a plurality of information processing apparatuses, each of which is connected to a plurality of shared devices that can be used by at least one other information processing apparatus through the network system, said information processing apparatus comprising:

management means for managing information of a first shared device managed by said information processing apparatus;

selection means for selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

reception means for receiving, from another information processing apparatus, information of [[a]] the second shared device used by included in the group selected by said selection means from the other information processing apparatus, the received information including information of the second shared device comprising an updated status and a connected condition;

recognition means for recognizing ~~which~~ whether at least one of the first and second shared devices has been updated regarding its status, in accordance with the information received by said reception means;

renewal means for updating the information on the status and/or a connected condition of the second shared device in accordance with a recognition result made by said recognition means; and

display means for displaying the information on the status and/or the connected condition of the second shared device updated by said renewal means and the information of the first shared device managed by said management means on a same screen of said display means.

Claim 2. (previously presented): An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reception means includes first reception control means for designating a group satisfying a predetermined condition and receiving the information of the shared device included in the group.

Claim 3. (previously presented): An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reception means includes second reception control means for detecting a log-on operation of another information processing apparatus to the network system and receiving the information of the shared devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 4. (previously presented): An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reception means is adapted, at a log-on operation to the network system, to automatically receive the information of the plurality of shared devices present on the network system.

Claims 5 and 6. (canceled)

Claim 7. (previously presented): An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said renewal means is adapted, in response to the detection of a log-off operation of another information processing apparatus from the network system, to invalidate the information of the shared devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 8. (canceled)

Claim 9. (currently amended): An information processing method for an information processing method managing a network system provided with a plurality of information processing apparatuses, to each of which is connected to a plurality of shared devices that can be used by at least one other information processing apparatus through the network system, said method comprising:

a management step, of managing information of a first shared device managed by the information processing apparatus;

a selection step, of selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

a reception step, of receiving, from another information processing apparatus, information of [[a]] the second shared device used by included in the group selected in said selection step from the other information processing apparatus, the received information including information of the second shared device including an updated status and a connected condition;

a recognition step, of recognizing which whether at least one of the first and second shared devices has been updated regarding its status, in accordance with the information received in said reception step;

a renewal step, of updating the information on the status [[of]] and/or a connected condition of the second shared device in accordance with a recognition result made in said recognition step; and

a display step, of displaying on display means the information on the status and/or the connected condition of the second shared device updated in said renewal step and the information of the first shared device managed by the information processing apparatus in said management step on a same screen of the display means.

Claim 10. (previously presented): An information processing method according to claim 9, wherein said reception step includes a first reception control step of designating a group satisfying a predetermined condition and receiving the information of the shared device included in the group.

Claim 11. (previously presented): An information processing method according to claim 9, wherein said reception step includes a second reception control step of detecting a log-on operation of another information processing apparatus to the network system and receiving the information of the shared devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 12. (previously presented): An information processing method according to claim 9, wherein said reception step includes, at a log-on operation to the network system, automatically receiving the information of the plurality of shared devices present on the network system.

Claims 13 and 14. (canceled)

Claim 15. (previously presented): An information processing method according to claim 9, wherein said renewal step includes, in response to the detection of a log-off operation of another information processing apparatus from the network system,

invalidating the information of the shared devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 16. (canceled)

Claim 17. (currently amended): A computer readable memory which stores a program to be executed by a computer of an information processing apparatus for managing a network system provided with a plurality of information processing apparatuses, each of which is connected to a plurality of shared devices that can be used by at least one other information processing apparatus through the network system, said information processing program comprising:

code for a management step, of managing information of, a first shared device managed by the information processing apparatus;

code for a selection step, of selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

code for a reception step, of receiving, from another information processing apparatus, information of [[a]] the second shared device used by included in the group selected by said code for the selection step from the other information processing

apparatus, the received information including information of the second shared device including an updated status and a connected condition;

code for a recognition step, of recognizing ~~which~~ whether at least one of the first and second shared devices has been updated regarding its status, in accordance with the information received by said code for the reception step;

code for a renewal step, of updating the information on the status and/or a connected condition of the second shared device in accordance with a recognition result made by said code for the recognition step; and

code for a display step, of displaying on display means the information on the status and/or connected condition of the second shared device updated by said code for the renewal step and the information of the first shared device managed by said code for the management step on a same screen of the display means.

Claim 18. (previously presented): A computer readable memory according to claim 17, wherein said code for the reception step includes code for a first reception control step of designating a group satisfying a predetermined condition and receiving the information of the shared device included in the group.

Claim 19. (previously presented): A computer readable memory according to claim 17, wherein said code for the reception step includes code for a second reception control step of detecting a log-on operation of another information processing apparatus to

the network system and receiving the information of the shared devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 20. (previously presented): A computer readable memory according to claim 17, wherein said code for the reception step includes, at a log-on operation to the network system, code for automatically receiving the information of the plurality of shared devices present in the network system.

Claims 21 and 22. (canceled)

Claim 23. (previously presented): A computer readable memory according to claim 17, wherein said code for the renewal step includes, in response to the detection of log-off of another information processing apparatus from the network system, code for invalidating the information of the shared of devices managed by the other information processing apparatus.

Claim 24. (canceled)

Claim 25. (currently amended): An information processing apparatus ~~for communicating with at least one other information processing apparatus and a plurality of~~

~~devices via a communication link, and managing a plurality of shared devices, said apparatus comprising:~~

management means for managing information of a first shared device managed by

said information processing apparatus;

selection means for selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

obtaining means for obtaining, ~~from another information processing apparatus,~~ information on a status or a connected condition of [[a]] the second shared device managed by included in the group selected by said selection means from the other information processing apparatus;

recognition means for recognizing whether at least one of the first and second shared devices has been updated regarding its status and/or connected condition, in accordance with the information obtained by said obtaining means; and

display means for displaying, on a display of said information processing apparatus, the information on the status and/or the connected condition of the second shared device, in accordance with a recognition result made by said recognition means, and information on a status and/or a connected condition of the first shared device in accordance with the information managed by said management means.

Claim 26. (previously presented): An apparatus according to claim 25, wherein said display means displays on the display of the information processing apparatus information on the status or the connected condition by icon changes.

Claim 27. (currently amended): An information processing method of an information processing apparatus ~~for communicating with at least one other information processing apparatus and a plurality of devices via a communication link, and for managing a plurality of shared devices~~, said method comprising:

a management step, of managing information of a first shared device managed by the information processing apparatus;

a selection step, of selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

an obtaining step, of obtaining, ~~from another information processing apparatus~~, information on a status or a connected condition of ~~[[a]] the shared device managed by included in the group selected in said selection step from the other information processing apparatus;~~

a recognition step, of recognizing ~~which whether at least~~ one of the first and second shared devices has been updated ~~regarding its status and/or connected condition, in accordance with the information obtained in said obtaining step; and~~

a display step, of displaying, on a display of the information processing

apparatus, the information on the status and/or the connected condition of the second shared device, and information on a status and/or a connected condition of the first shared device in accordance with the information managed in said management step.

Claim 28. (previously presented): A method according to claim 27, in which said display step includes displaying on the display of the information processing apparatus information on the status or the connected condition by icon changes.

Claim 29. (currently amended): A computer readable memory which stores a program to be executed by a computer of an information processing apparatus ~~for communicating with at least one other information processing apparatus and a plurality of devices via a communication link, and for managing a plurality of shared devices, said~~ program comprising:

code for a management step, of managing information of a first shared device managed by the information processing apparatus;

code for a selection step, of selecting a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first shared device and a second shared device managed by another information processing apparatus;

code for an obtaining step, of obtaining, ~~from another information processing apparatus;~~ information on a status or a connected condition of [[a]] the second shared device managed by included in the group selected by said code for the selection step

from the other information processing apparatus;

code for a recognition step, of recognizing which whether at least one of the first and second devices has been updated regarding its status and/or connected condition, in accordance with the information obtained by said code for the obtaining step; and a display step, of displaying, on a display of the information processing apparatus, the information on the status and/or the connected condition of a second shared device, in accordance with a recognition result made by said code for the recognition step, and information on a status and/or a connected condition of the first shared device in accordance with the information managed by said code for the management step.

Claim 30. (previously presented): A computer readable memory according to claim 29, in which said display step includes displaying information on the status or the connected condition by icon changes.

Claim 31. (new) An information processing apparatus that manages a first device, comprising:

designation means for designating a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first device and a second device managed by another information processing apparatus;

obtaining means for obtaining first device information on the first device from the first device, and second device information on the second device included in the

group designated by said designation means from the other information processing apparatus; and

display means for displaying a status and/or a connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information obtained by said obtaining means.

Claim 32. (new) An apparatus according to claim 31, further comprising:  
storage means for storing the first and second device information obtained by said obtaining means in correspondence with an attribute of the group designated by said designation means; and

specifying means for, when said designation means designates the group, specifying the first and second device information corresponding to the attribute of the designated group from among a plurality of pieces of device information stored in said storage means,

wherein said display means displays the status and/or the connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information specified by said specifying means.

Claim 33. (New) An information processing method of an information processing apparatus that manages a first device, comprising:  
a designation step, of designating a group comprising a plurality of devices

including the first device and a second device managed by another information processing apparatus;

an obtaining step, of obtaining first device information on the first device from the first device, and second device information on the second device included in the group designated in said designation step from the other information processing apparatus; and

a display step, of displaying a status and/or a connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information obtained in said obtaining step.

Claim 34. (New) A method according to claim 33, further comprising:  
a storage step, of storing the first and second device information obtained in said obtaining step in correspondence with an attribute of the group designated in said designation step; and

a specifying step, of, when said designation step designates the group, specifying the first and second device information corresponding to the attribute of the designated group from among a plurality of pieces of device information stored in said storage step,

wherein said display step displays the status and/or the connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information specified in said specifying step.

Claim 35. (new) A computer readable memory which stores a program to be executed by a computer of an information processing apparatus that manages a first device, comprising:

code for a designation step, of designating a group comprising a plurality of devices including the first device and a second device managed by another information processing apparatus;

code for an obtaining step, of obtaining first device information on the first device from the first device, and second device information on the second device included in the group designated by said code for the designation step from the other information processing apparatus; and

code for a display step, of displaying a status and/or a connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information obtained by said code for the obtaining step.

Claim 36. (new) A computer readable memory according to claim 35, further comprising:

code for a storage step, of storing the first and second device information obtained by said code for the obtaining step in correspondence with an attribute of the group designated by said code for the designation step; and

code for a specifying step, of, when said code for the designation step designates the group, specifying the first and second device information corresponding to

the attribute of the designated group from among a plurality of pieces of device information stored by said code for the storage step,

wherein said code for the display step displays the status and/or the connected condition of the first and second devices based on the first device information and the second device information specified by said code for the specifying step.